

REMARKS

Favorable and prompt allowance of the pending claims in the application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars.

1. Interview of July 7, 2006

The applicant appreciates the opportunity extended by the examiner to the applicant's representative to conduct a personal interview on July 7, 2006.

During the interview, various features of the wound dressing according to the pending claims were discussed at length, and demonstrated with a sample of a wound dressing having the features required by the pending claims.

For each of the independent claims 1, 12, 22 and 23, the examiner recommended that these claims be amended to recite that the border portion of the adhesive layer surrounds the "peripheral edges" of the absorbent core. It is believed that this amendment provides greater clarity as to how the adhesive layer surrounds the absorbent core.

Regarding claims 1 and 22, it was pointed out that U.S. patent application publication 2003/0088202 (*Gilman*) describes the skin adherent layer in the wound dressing thereof as possibly including a hydrogel. It was agreed that hydrogels are readily understood as being hydrophilic. It was agreed that by amending pending claims 1 and 22 to recite a "hydrophobic gel," claims 1 and 22 would be differentiated from *Gilman*.

Turning to claims 9 and 12, it was noted that the second facing layer of these claims are specifically recited as being contiguous with the first facing layer, and effectively surrounding by the first facing layer. On the other hand, it was shown that *Gilman* teaches the apertured foam layer (20) as being located on the backside surface of the dressing. It is not a facing layer intended to be adjacent to the body ([0020] – [0021]).

Lastly, on claim 23, similar arguments for claims 9 and 12 were presented. The apertured foam layer (20) described in *Gilman* was clearly shown as being on the backside of the dressing, with portions (22) extending beyond the periphery of the backing layer and the adhesive coating (16). On the other hand, the second, apertured layer of claim 23 is recited as being located on the bodyside of the dressing and surrounded by the first facing layer, and is clearly not suggested by *Gilman*.

2. In the claims

Claims 1 and 22 are amended to recite that the border portion of the backing layer generally uniformly extends beyond and surrounds peripheral edges of the absorbent core. Claims 1 and 22 are also amended to recite that the first adhesive layer is a "hydrophobic gel" and surrounds the peripheral edges of the absorbent core.

Claims 9 and 12 are amended to recite that the periphery of the second facing layer is contiguous with a periphery of the first facing layer.

Claim 23 is amended to recite that the apertured section of the facing layer corresponds to and is bounded by the peripheral edges of the absorbent core.

Support for the amendment to these claims is found in FIGS. 17 and 18, and corresponding sections in the specification.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is introduced into the application by way of this amendment to the claims. Entry and consideration of the amendment to the claims is respectfully requested.

3. Rejection of claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent application publication 2006/0088202 (*Gilman*)

Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested on the basis of the amendment to the claims and the observations noted during the interview.

First, the pending independent claims either specify that the border portion of the first adhesive layer forms the bodyside surface of the wound dressing and is arranged to surround the peripheral edges of the absorbent core, or, in the alternative, the apertured portion of the adhesive layer is bordered by peripheral edges of the absorbent core. In *Gilman*, the base film 12, which forms the bodyside surface of the dressing, is not arranged to surround the peripheral edges of the foam 11, as exemplified by Figs. 1 and 2 of *Gilman*.

Next, regarding claims 1 and 22, while *Gilman* teaches that the adhesive coating 16 on the film 12 is hydrogel ([0015]), which is readily understood as being hydrophilic, claims 1 and 22 specifically require that the adhesive layer is a hydrophobic gel.

As noted during the interview, the second facing layer of pending claims 9 and 12 is specifically recited as being contiguous with the first facing layer, and effectively surrounding by the first facing layer. On the other hand, it was shown that *Gilman* teaches the apertured foam layer (20) as being located on the backside surface of the dressing. It is not a facing layer intended to be adjacent to the body ([0020] – [0021]). The apertured foam layer (20) is clearly described in *Gilman* as being on the backside of the dressing, with portions (22) extending beyond the periphery of the backing layer and the adhesive coating (16).

Lastly, turning to pending claim 23, the apertured portion of the facing layer is clearly described as being adjacent to the distal surface of the absorbent core, and bounded by the peripheral edges of the absorbent core. The facing layer is specifically described as defining the entirety of the bodyside of the wound dressing. In observing *Gilman*, apertured foam layer (20) is described as a delivery assisting layer and must be on the backside surface in order to permit drug delivery ([0020]). It follows that if the foam layer were provided on the

bodyside of the dressing, then one could not provide drug delivery to the remainder of the dressing.

It is submitted that *Gilman* does not disclose or suggest the construction of the facing layer in combination with the absorbent core recited in pending claim 23.

In view of these observations, it is respectfully asserted that *Gilman* does not render the pending claims *prima facie* obvious since *Gilman* does not disclose or suggest to one skilled in the art to make a wound dressing having all of the limitations of the pending claims.

Therefore, withdrawal of the current rejection of the claims is kindly requested.

4. Conclusion

As a result of the amendment to the claims, and further in view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that every pending claim in the present application be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the applicants' attorney, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown below.

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Date: August 3, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



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